

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

LONDON, SATURDAY, JANUARY 24, 1818.

[98]

LETTER II.*

TO

MAJOR CARTWRIGHT.

On some of the subjects of his Letters to Sir Francis Burdett and to the Lord Mayor, and on the base conduct of the Boroughmongers, with regard to Spanish America.

North Hampstead, Long Island.

November 6, 1817.

MY DEAR SIR,

The packet which you have been so kind as to send me is very valuable in itself, and will, I hope, not become useless in my hands; but, in my estimation, it is doubly valuable as coming from you.

I have read attentively your Letters, addressed to Sir Francis Burdett, and published in the Statesman of the 12th, 19th and 21st of August last; and also your Letters, addressed to the Lord Mayor, and published by Mr. Hone in June or July last. As far as talent and knowledge go, I find nothing new here; for talent and knowledge mark all you write and all you say. Nor am I at all struck by the ardent zeal, the devotion to country, which are here apparent in every line; but, I do find here a good deal of *novelty* in your mode of assailing the *Banditti*; and I have to return you my particular thanks for the great mass of *legal constitutional knowledge*, contained in these Letters, in which thanks I am joined by my Sons; for, they are sen-

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sible of the great help, which you have herein afforded them in the pursuit of their studies, and I am sure, that this help will greatly contribute to their means of being able to assist us in demolishing the despotism, which now oppresses and degrades our beloved country. I would recommend to every one, and especially to all the young men, to read the Letters above-mentioned.

Thus you go on, in spite of danger and in spite of age, to sow the seeds of useful knowledge and of national freedom; and, when I think of the wonderful efforts you have made, and the not less wonderful effects that you have produced; when I think of these, and of the immense benefits to our country, from your bright example; when I think of these, how am I to think without indignation of COLONEL MAINE having been selected for Coventry and Mr. BROUGHAM for Westminster? I know you will say: "Never think of me. Never mind me. Think only of the cause." But, how are we to think of the cause *separately* from you? If your knowledge, your talent, your devotion to the cause, qualified as you are in all other respects, are not sufficient to put you before Colonel Maine and Mr. Brougham, how is that cause ever to succeed? You are proving to the world the *ignorance* as well as the *political turpitude* of this unprincipled lawyer; you are doing this in Letters addressed to Sir Francis Burdett; and, in the face of all this, Sir Francis is calling

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that lawyer his "*learned and honourable friend*"; and, as you well know, there was a settled scheme for palming this same lawyer upon the City of Westminster. My dear Sir, let not your modesty and disinterestedness induce you to believe, or to hope, that those who can endeavour to seat this man in parliament to *your exclusion*, are, in any effectual way, labouring for the cause.

We want a Reform of the Parliament. Why do we? Because we want the people to be fully and fairly represented. Why do we wish this? Because we want the Commons' House to contain men *willing, as well as able, to support the rights and to take care of the interests of the nation*. This is what we want a Reform for. We do not ask for it as something to please our theoretical fancies. We seek in a reform practical and solid good. And, what is the main object of your Letters to the worthy Lord Mayor? Why, to shew what a set of influenced and insignificant things now have the power to ruin and enslave us. If our Reform would put into parliament such men only as Colonel MAINE and Mr. BROUGHAM, what *good* would a Reform do us? Can we, then, allow, that it is right to endeavour to put such men in now; to fill with such men the two or three seats that the People really have any thing to do in filling? It is not of the *form*, but of the *substance*, of the present thing, of which we complain. If such men as *you* were now chosen; if the rotten Boroughs were to return such men as you, and were not to return *poor sticks* (as the Lancashire people call them) and unprincipled and rascacious clever men, we should care little

about Reform. But, we know, that wholesome fruit cannot come from roots and trunks and branches of poison; and, therefore, we want a Reform. If we were asked, whether we want any thing more than a state of things, which would insure the election of men like you, we should all exclaim, *no! no!* Well, then, *why* are you not in the House of Commons? Why, at any rate, are you not, as a *matter of course*, talked of as the successor of LORD COCHRANE, if the death of his Lordship's father, or any other accidental circumstance, should leave his Lordship's seat vacant?

If my LORD COCHRANE should go to *South America*, he will resign his seat of course; and, then, I trust, we shall hear no more of any lawyers or colonels or ancient kings having the folly to attempt to shut you out of that place, where you are able to serve us so essentially. The Westminster Rump Committee have affected to think you *too old*. You are young enough to write with more constitutional and legislative learning, with more power of reasoning and more force of language, than any man amongst all the legions of the Boroughmongers. You are young enough to perform more labour with the pen than any man that ever lived. You are young enough to begin every day of your life, *long before the rising of the sun*, and to labour 'till the morning-snorers are again in their beds. You are young enough to answer, with the punctuality of a counting-house, a hundred letters in a week, by way of episode in your other labours. You are young enough for all this; and you would, if in parliament, have been young enough to de-

send the Reformers, and to prevent their being dungeoned and gagged ; you are quite young enough for all this. But, alas ! you are *too old* to be the *colleague* of Sir Francis Burdett !

The insolence of this pretext is more offensive even than its baseness. But, upon this subject, I will, in my next Number, make an appeal directly to the true-hearted and enlightened people of Westminster ; and will take the liberty to give them and the Reformers in general my opinion as to the *active* and *open* means, which may immediately be put in practice to secure your election, whenever another opportunity shall occur ; whether from an accidental circumstance, or, from a dissolution of the Parliament.

In the meanwhile let me pride myself a little on the circumstance, that while I was complaining *here* of the *Bill* not having been proposed by Sir Francis, you were making the same complaint *in England* ; and, if you have abstained from direct and expressed censure, and confined yourself to censure clearly implied, while I have bestowed on this flagrant neglect of duty the censure it manifestly deserves, this difference in our mode of proceeding has arisen from the circumstance, that you, when you wrote, entertained a *hope*, which I did not entertain, and, in which respect, I unfortunately was but too right in my opinion. You expressed your hope, at the conclusion of your last letter to the Lord Mayor, that Sir Francis would, before the close of the Session, *move for leave to bring in a Bill*. The Session closed, however, and *no such motion was made* ! And never, in my opinion, will that motion be

made by him ; for, if the time for his doing it was not last winter, when, in the name of common sense, is that time to arrive ?

Your observations on Sir Francis's motion for a Committee to *inquire* into the State of the Representation of the people are short, but they hit the point precisely. You tell the Lord Mayor, what, indeed, we all well know, that the motion was *unnecessary*. And, indeed, it was *worse* than unnecessary ; for it was mischievous. The motion was opposed by "only four members for rotten boroughs, and by Lord Milton" ; for he is the heir to six or seven of those "sinks of Corruption," of which you speak. Very true ; but, was not even this a greater degree of respect than the motion merited ? The ministers shewed their contempt of the motion *by staying away* ; and, leaving their principles out of the question, they acted very properly. I see, by a remark in the newspapers, that LORD COCHRANE was not present on the day of this motion. This may be so, or not. But, would you, Sir, have been present without protesting against the motion ? I think you would not. I am sure that I should not ; for, if that motion was proper, you and Sir Francis and every man of us have, for years past, been most vile and seditious libellers of the Honourable House. There was not the smallest pretext for the motion, as coming from Sir Francis ; while it was sure to be injurious ; because it manifestly argued a *doubt* of the necessity and justice of our demands of a Reform. Sir JOHN NICHOL argued well when he said : "as *it is not denied* that some alteration

"may be expedient, it is incumbent on those, who propose alterations, to show that they will cure the evil complained of." On this you very justly remark, that a *Bill* would have obviated this sort of opposition. Who would give way if the assailant was resolved not to come to closer quarters than a motion for inquiry? It is a cowardly garrison indeed, who hang out a white flag before the besiegers have ventured to break ground. Ridiculous as was the summoning of the Tower by CASTLES and his brother spies, it was not more ridiculous than the idea of attacking the Borough faction by the means of motions for inquiry; and that, too, at the end of a score or two of years of such motions.

You express, in your letters to the Lord Mayor, your *hope*, that, before the end of the Session, Sir Francis will bring forward his *Bill*. This *hope* has been disappointed. If you could infuse your soul into some Member of Parliament, we should not live long without seeing a *Bill*; but, until you can do this, or can find some one with such a soul, the thing will never be done. You know well, Sir, that this subject of the *Bill* was discussed most fully long before the Parliament met. You know well, that the idea of a Committee of Inquiry was scouted as ridiculous and mischievous. You know well, that you expected the *Bill* to be moved for in one month from the opening of the parliament. You know well, that you *confidently relied*, that SIR FRANCIS would, on the *very first day* of the session, give notice for that day month, of a *motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the Reform of the Commons' House*. You

know, that you spoke of this with as much confidence as if the thing had been settled on by legal contracts. We will not speak here of any thing that had passed in private, if, indeed, the word *private* can be applicable to such a transaction. Let us confine ourselves to notoriously public transactions. Can it be denied, then, that, by a paper, *signed by Sir Francis himself*, and circulated with his consent and approbation, *DEPUTIES were called together to consult on the draft of a Bill*, to be proposed to parliament during the then ensuing session? Can it be denied, that these Deputies did meet? Can it be denied, that Sir Francis's brother was associated with you in laying before the Deputies so met, *the Heads of a Bill*? Can it be denied, that the Deputies came to a regular determination as to the sort of *Bill* which they wished for; and can it be denied, that they came to a resolution, that, as to the details of the *Bill*, they had so entire a confidence in the wisdom and integrity of Sir Francis, that they were willing to leave that matter wholly to him?

After this, who could have expected any thing short of a *Bill*? What, Sir! Was it not the settled opinion, that the long procrastination as to a *Bill* had done infinite mischief? For years and years the enemies of Reform had been asking *what it was that we wanted*? They had been asking for our *plan*. Lord MILTON said, that he wished to come to close quarters with us. The *People* were quite ready for close quarters; but their Commander wanted another game at long-shot; another twenty years of procrastination and of useless and pointless talk. A *Bill* was, as you well know, re-

garded as necessary to keep the people *united* and to keep them *tranquil*, even in case of failure. For, when once the Bill had been moved for, it would have had a parliamentary existence. It would have been *printed*. It would have been a subject of *discussion* every where. It would have daily gained friends; because our foes would no longer have been able to *misrepresent our designs*. The false alarm about *revolutionary* projects would have been put an end to. The Bill, though rejected, would have been a *rallying point*. Our future petitions would have been clear, short, and simple, because we should have had nothing to pray for but the *adoption of the Bill*. All this was so manifest, that there had been no sort of hesitation in proposing and promising (as far as promises, in such cases, are ever made) to act accordingly. And yet, when it came to the pinch, though every day's events rendered a Bill more and more necessary, *no Bill was moved for*; and, again I say, that, by Sir Francis, *no Bill ever will be moved for*.

Let us suppose, Sir, you to have been a Member of Parliament instead of Sir Francis. What would have been your conduct, and what its probable effects? On the first day of the session, and the instant the Speaker took the chair, you would have risen, and given notice, for that day month, of a motion for leave to bring in a Bill for the Reform of the Common's House. I will not ask here what your conduct would have been, while the Vipers were calumniating us. All the world knows, that you must have been stricken dead, before you could have remained silent, or have restrained

your indignation at the attempts, which were manifestly about to be made. But, with the prospect of a Bill coming before them at the end of a month, do you think that our base calumniators would have been so bold? Well, at the end of the month, and before the Bourbon System was in motion, *your Bill* would have been before the public. All men would then have clearly seen what it was that we wanted. *Discussion*, in the House and out of it, would have taken place. Discussion is sure to aid the cause of truth. The people, seeing distinctly the precise thing, for which we prayed, would have been strengthened in their opinions and their efforts would have increased. Reformers, not so well able to express as to think, would have had an answer to all questions relating to their views. The impression on the public mind would have been deep and lasting, because the opinions would have had a fair foundation. The People would have rallied round *the Bill*; and, though it might have been rejected, it would still have been in existence, and would have encouraged *hopes*, and tended to produce patience and forbearance. Those who were undecided, owing to the fears, which the tyrants had excited of our having *revolutionary views*, would have decided for us, when they saw, as they must have seen, that we had no such views. The principles and the provisions of the Bill would have shown, not only precisely what we wanted, but, as you well observe, in showing what we *did want*, they would have shown what we *did not want*. My opinion is, that if you had been in parliament, we should have seen no Bourbon System, and, if

we had failed in obtaining our Reform then, we should have acquired a degree of support that would, at no distant day, have carried us through.

But, Sir, why not *publish* this Bill NOW? I must confess, that I can see no one reason against it, while I see a multitude of reasons for it. Every body knows, that the drawing of the Bill was left to you. And, to whom else should it have been left? Who was there that had a fourth part of your knowledge of Constitutional Law? Who was there that possessed a fourth part of your experience? Who was there that was armed like you with all the means of defending every principle and every provision of such a Bill? Who was there, in whom every man reposed so entire a confidence, not only as to integrity but as to talent? Who was there, that, over and over again, and for years and years, had thought of every part of the subject, however minute, and who was ready with an answer to every objection that could possibly be raised? If the millions of Reformers, in the three kingdoms, could have been asked, man by man, "who shall draw the Bill?" Every man of them would have answered: "Major Cartwright."

Now, is it not wrong to suffer this Bill to lie any longer in your bureau? It was right to keep it there as long as there was any hope of its being presented to, or moved for in, the House of Commons; but, that hope having wholly disappeared, ought the people to be deprived of the benefit of a precise knowledge of what was intended to be moved for? The Bill actually moved for in the House would have been *best*; but, that we cannot have. The next best thing is to let the world

see what it was that we really did want; and, I am far from supposing that the good effect will be *much* less now, than it would have been if the Bill had been brought forward in the manner which we wished and fully expected, and that we had a *right* fully to expect. All the reasons for moving for leave to bring in a Bill apply to the publishing of that Bill now, with this addition, that now the world will see what it is that all the Spies and dealers in human blood have been employed to prevent. There must be a *general election* before it be long; and, small as is the power of any portion of the people to *instruct* those who call themselves their representatives, it is not to be believed, that some of them, in the less-enslaved cities and towns, will not call upon candidates to endeavour to restore the country to freedom. I expect corruption, bribery and outrage, heretofore unheard of; but, still, some men will speak out under the sanction of a privilege, which, (for this once) will have an appearance of being respected. Now, there are candidates enough, who will *pretend*, that they are for *Reform*; but, by *Reform*, they will, when chosen, explain that they did not mean our "*wild projects*." With the Bill in their minds, the people will have a *test* ready for all candidates. "*Will you move for, or will you support, Major Cartwright's Bill?*" Here is something too definite to be shuffled out of; and we shall know our men at once.

I protest, as I always have protested, against acting upon any hope of inducing persons to join us by accommodating our plans and language to what they are pleased to denominate

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nate "moderation." You have, on so many occasions, so admirably exposed the folly, or the fraud, of this pretended moderation, that I will not dwell upon it here; and, all that I shall take the liberty to suggest on the subject of hopes of bringing over men, is that we ought not, by *that hope*, to be induced to *delay* doing any thing which is naturally calculated to confirm the opinions and increase the energy of those who are *now* with us. I know well, that it is out of the power of all the fair promises, of all the coaxing, all the wheedling, which frightened fraud has at its command, to induce you to abandon one single fraction of *principle*. You have been tried, in this respect, in all sorts of ways. There is no art, which has not been put in practice to make you yield a *something*. When in the witness-box, on the trials of Messrs. TOOKE and HARDY, you were asked by the Attorney General, "whether you, an "English Gentleman of ancient and "most respectable family, could possibly agree in opinion about Reform "with Mr. Tooke."—"No: for Mr. "TOOKE does not go so far as *Universal Suffrage*, and *I do*."—This has been your course. Neither coaxing nor bullying has ever made you budge an inch from *principle*. And, it is this course pursued by you, at all times, in all seasons, and under all circumstances, which has kept the cause from perishing. You have always kept your standard hoisted; and this has been the principal cause of the exertion of all that talent and energy which have recently appeared.

I am, therefore, not at all afraid of your being induced to give up one particle of *principle*. I know you

never will. But, I also am well acquainted with your modesty and your personal complaisance; and I may be permitted to fear, that these may induce you to *defer* the doing of some things, which you yourself think ought to be done, and, especially, if in the doing of these things, there can possibly be room for your supposing that even the enemies of our liberty may ascribe your actions to *motives of self-gratification*. The purity of your patriotism; your unparalleled disinterestedness; these have been of great weight. They have done great good to the cause, not only by the lustre which it has thus received from the just reputation of its Leader, but by the *example* thus given to others. Yet, these qualities, excellent and rare as they are, may, in some cases, prove injurious to the cause itself. Indeed, such has been their effect by the keeping of you out of that House, where you could have rendered the cause so much service; but, I hope and trust, that no feelings of the kind, of which I have just spoken, will operate to prevent the *publication of your Bill*.

That this may be done with as much good effect as possible, the publication should be in a form to reach the eye of the whole of the people, and, therefore, it should be made in the hated "*Cheap Publications*." Others, I dare say, will be glad to avail themselves of such an opportunity of enhancing the value of their works; but, if this should not be the case, I hereby request the *Publisher of the Register* to receive from you the Manuscript, to cause the contents to be published in the *Register**, and to

* The Bill has already been published, by WILSON, Royal Exchange: but an Abstract of it, or the whole, if it can be comprised in one Number, shall be inserted in the Register, in case MAJOR CARTWRIGHT desires it.

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afford you every necessary means of *correcting the Press*. As the thing must be *a whole*, and must, on no account, be separated; as the whole must be contained in one single Register; as the *body* of a Bill (necessarily long) cannot be contained in one single Register; and, as the repetitions and redundancies, required in an *Act of Parliament*, will not be necessary to a clear understanding of the matter, it will be best to insert an *Abstract of the Bill*, framed, as to its length, to suit the space which it is to occupy.

I hope you will agree with me in opinion upon this subject. Even last winter, it was the earnest wish of many very able as well as very zealous men, that this step should then be taken, even before they knew that Sir Francis Burdett would not move for leave to bring in the Bill. They were impatient to see our case truly, fully, and distinctly stated. *They* well knew what was intended; but, daily experience taught them, that the nation at large had but an imperfect knowledge as to the *application*, or the *mode of applying*, our principles, though every one, except he were a born-ideot, must know what were the principles themselves. These gentlemen were certainly right. They say how important it was to make our case fully known; and, they were restrained from making open complaints on the subject only by their reliance on seeing the Bill moved for in the House in the space of a few weeks. Now, however, when that reliance has been proved to have been groundless; now, when we have been abandoned, where we had a right to look for a gallant and

even desperate defence; now, when even credulity itself can no longer look with hope to that quarter, suffer me, Sir, in the name of the calumniated and insulted Reformers, to call upon you to prove to the world, that that which we wished to be proposed to the House, had in it nothing that was "*mad*," "*wild*," "*seditionous*" or *blasphemous*."

As to the Bill being, at any future time, proposed to the House, that will depend upon *who shall be in the House*; and, indeed, if all sense, or all spirit, has not departed from the country, we shall see *you* in that House to *propose your own Bill*. That is what I want to see. I would gladly see others there to support and assist you; but, it is *you*, first of all, that I want to see in that place; and not Colonel MAINE, Mr. BROUGHAM, or "*the descendant of the last kings of Ireland*." If this trio should fail the *Nominators* for Westminster, I wonder whether those profound and public-spirited gentlemen will *next* cast their eyes! What will they do? I should not at all wonder, if they were to propose the German who is Lieutenant Colonel of the 10th Light Dragoons. Let us hope, however, that before an election shall come on in Westminster, the good and enlightened men of that city will see the necessity of *picking out a man for themselves*; and, in that case, I am very certain, that their choice will fall upon you. With regard to one thing, however, I am resolved; and that is, if I am at home, when the *next* election for Westminster takes place (as it is probable I shall), Sir Francis never shall be re-elected without my publicly demanding his reasons for

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not moving for the Bill, and also his reasons for not seconding the Amendment of Lord Cochrane, or, for not making a similar motion himself.

It is quite useless, my dear Sir, for us to place any dependence here any longer, unless we come to something specific, something *positive*, something *public*, which cannot be retracted. We put *tests* to every body else, and we see the want of it here. We do not ask a man what he *thinks* of our cause, but what he will *do for that cause*. From an *advertisement*, which I see in the MORNING CHRONICLE of the 27th September, I am led to suppose, that Sir FRANCIS looked upon it as being made a PUPPET to be called upon to do certain things in Parliament. The advertisement is that of a Letter to the Baronet, of which the contents, or heads, are given in the advertisement, amongst which heads are these: "Sir Francis, on the first day of the Session, arrives at his own house from Leicestershire.— Afterwards goes to the House of Commons.—He himself states that the motion of Lord Cochrane was submitted to him.—Explains why he was absent on the Motion, and proves tests against being used as a PUPPET.—Lord Cochrane absent on Sir Francis's motion.—Why Sir Francis is *England's hope*."

Aye! I should like very much to be treated to this *why*! And I am not in charity with those who ought to have sent it me. Because, "*England's hope*," seriously used, are words of most interesting import. It was a very pretty *toast* at dinner; but, uttered in sober seriousness, uttered in a pamphlet, and uttered now, the words do indeed require a "*why*" and a pretty satisfactory *why* too. The author of this pamphlet may have come to the knowledge of something which Sir Francis intends to do, in order to justify the use of this appellation; but, if I may judge from what he has done, during the last twelve months, I can, I must confess, see very little ground for an *eulogium* too.

hyperbolical to find a place in a prose composition. The pamphlet may be in verse, perhaps; and then, I can, of course, have no right to demand *reasons* for any of its assertions.

I am commenting on this pamphlet without having seen it, and, of course, I may wholly mistake its contents. But, I shall take the heads, and proceed upon the *supposition* that the contents are such and such. It is said, then, that Sir Francis, on the day of opening the session, "arrived at his house from Leicestershire, and afterwards went to the House of Commons." I had said, that he came in a post-chaise from Leicestershire to the door of the House without going to his own house. Well, and what then? Supposing him to have gone into his own house, what does that make? How does that alter the case? There are plenty of witnesses to prove, that he was not at home, or, at least, that he was not *at home to the Reformers* with rolls of petitions, so late as *three o'clock* of that day. His stepping out of the chaise into his own house for a moment, does not alter the case, except for the worse; for, if he did alight at his own house, why did he not call *on you* on the way to the House of Commons, agreeably to the terms of a letter from him, which you read to a number of the bearers of petitions? Indeed, his not calling upon you was excused upon the ground of his not having *had time*, he having, as we were told, been *too late*, and having been forced to *hurry* down to the House in his post-chaise. Perhaps the Pamphlet, as it promises to tell me *why* Sir Francis is *England's hope*, may also tell me *why* Sir Francis was *so late* in coming from Leicestershire; and, I wish it may tell me this; for, I have never been able to discover any but one reason for it, in which respect I was of opinion with every one of the Reformers, whom I conversed with. Our excellent friend, Mr. HULME, whom I saw the other day, and who has brought hither his family and fortune, resolved that

neither should remain under the grasp of the Borough extortioners and tyrants), asked you, when he came up to town, where Sir Francis was. You told him he was in *Leicestershire*. "In *Leicestershire!*" exclaimed he, "what does he do there?"—"He has an *estate* there."—"Aye, and I have *my affairs* in *Lancashire*; but, I am *here*?"—This was the language of all the gentlemen from the country. They were *surprized* when they came, and *disgusted* long before they went away.

The author of the Pamphlet says, in his list of heads: "Sir Francis *himself* states, that Lord Cochrane's motion was submitted to him." Well then, no other person needs state the fact; but, this is the first that I have heard of his having stated it. But, we are told, that "Sir Francis *explains* WHY he was absent on the motion, and protests against being used as a *PUPPET*." Let us keep things a little distinct here: for the matter is very important.

1st. He acknowledges that the Amendment was submitted to him.

2nd. He explains *why* he was absent when it was put.

3rd. He protests against being used as a *PUPPET*.

This I take to be the only *defence* that will be set up: and a most sorry defence it is. Flying into a *passion*, and saying you *don't care*, is a sure sign of a consciousness of having no *reason* to rest upon. Let any man of public spirit look at the *Speech* at the opening of the session; let him there see the grossest calumnies on the *Reformers*; let him there see clearly pointed out dungeon and gagging bills; let him then read the speeches of both factions, heaping all sorts of false-charges and of foul aspersions on the *Reformers*; let him hear this debate, these tirades of infamous falsehoods and base and cowardly abuse continue for two successive nights: let any honourable man witness this, and he will not ask, whether Sir Francis *seconded* a motion in our de-

fence, or *why* he was absent from such seconding; but, such man will ask, whether Sir Francis was stricken dumb, or dead, when he hears, that he suffered the long, long debate, to go off without opening his *lips*! To be sure, when the Amendment was presented to him, his going away without waiting to second it tended to make his conduct the more decidedly bad; but, it was quite bad enough without this circumstance. Besides, he advised Lord COCHRANE *not to move the amendment!* And yet he *did nothing himself!* If Lord Cochrane had not made this attempt, we should have been manacled without one single soul breathing an accent in our defence. Sir Francis did not *expect* that Lord Cochrane would move the amendment. And what of that? We complain of his *not having expected it*; we complain of his not being *at hand to be ready for it*; we complain of his not having thought it a matter of much greater importance than his Tower business, or than any thing he ever had had a hand in; we complain, in short, that he did nothing himself; that he endeavoured to prevail on his colleague to do nothing; and, that the latter having persevered, he left him to shift for himself, and thus contrived that the *Reformers*, including the very *Deputies* called together by himself, should be blackened by scores of foul tongues without having one word recorded on the *Journals* in their defence.

"He *protests* against being used as a *PUPPET*." I lay great stress on this, because this is *all* that can or will be said in defence of Sir Francis's conduct. *Defence* it is none, any more than Perceval's cry of *Jacobin* against Mr. Maddox was a defence of his conduct in partaking in the sale of a seat. *Defence* it is none; but, upon the supposition, that Sir Francis has made such a *protest*, I deem it worthy of particular notice.

"A *PUPPET*!" Very well. Let us see, whether there could be any ground for his supposing, or affecting

to suppose, that there had, in the case of the Amendment, been any attempt to make use of him as a *puppet*. Let us see, whether there was any *ground* for such a supposition. Sir Francis Burdett was elected for Westminster by the aid of a subscription. He was so elected because he was regarded as an undaunted advocate in the cause of Reform. During more than 12 years, he has been calling upon the people to *come forward to demand a Reform*, and, during the same space, he has frequently *reproached the people*, and with great harshness too, because they were so *tardy*, and discovered so little alacrity in obeying his call. At last the people came forward with about a million and a half of names signed to petitions. Corruption is alarmed. She is preparing to murder the persons who have come forward at Sir Francis's call. He moves neither tongue nor pen in their defence. He sits out two day's debate, sees the chains forging, and holds his tongue. At last Lord Cochrane submits a written Amendment to him, the object of which is to defend the Reformers. He advises Lord Cochrane not even to make the attempt. Lord Cochrane does it, however, and his colleague is not present to second the motion. Charged with all this, what does he say? That he *protests* against being used as a *puppet*! What, Sir! is a man a *puppet* when he remains firm to his engagements, and when he defends boldly those whom he has earnestly besought to do what they have done? Is such a man a *puppet*? But, it is being used as a *puppet*, perhaps, if he carry to the House and move a Bill or a resolution or an address, or any thing else, which has been drawn up by another man? Perhaps it is *this* which would make a man a *puppet*? Oh, no! Let us not banter on such a subject. Sir Francis Burdett is not a fool; and he must be a down-right fool before he will venture to say any such thing as this. At this rate the Ministers would all be *puppets*, for they not only move for Bills, which

they have not drawn, but which, nine times out of ten, they have not even read. Liverpool and Sidmouth and the rest of them were, then, the *puppets* of Garrow and Shepherd, in the affair of the dungeon and gagging bills. Nay, Garrow and Shepherd were the *puppets* of their *Clerks*; and, as the Clerks could not have written without being kept alive by food and lodging and fire, they were *puppets*, to be sure, in the hands of some smoke-dried sybil in, or about, Chancery Lane. Not to descend any further, here is a curious source of the Bourbon System! At this rate we are *all* puppets. You, Sir, are a *puppet* in my hands; I am a *puppet* in your hands; and so on. In short, it is a paltry pretended ground of complaint, that never had any foundation other than that of a consciousness of not having acted the manly and the faithful part.

Perhaps, however, "to be used as a *puppet*" means this: being induced to do *that which we ourselves do not think ought to be done*. This, indeed, has something more of reason and sense in it; but, even this will not answer the purpose. Where men have to act *in concert*, they must, unless they cease to act at all, sometimes give way to the opinions of others; or else, what could be the use of *deliberation*? If there be any man, who has the presumption to say, that the opinions of all other men shall yield to his opinions, such a man cannot be borne with. To act with such a man we must be slaves. Sir Francis has always professed to hold the opinion, that the people have a clear right not only to *elect* their Representatives, but to *instruct them from time to time*. What a *puppet* such a Representative must be, who may be called upon to act in direct opposition to his own opinion! But, Sir Francis has not yet told us, that the motion of Lord Cochrane was *contrary to his opinion*. If he had plainly and honestly told us *this*, we should have understood him, and, at once, demanded his *reasons*.

He has dealt in *causas*. First, he was out in the gallery. That was not enough; because *why* was he not in the House? Then he did not think it just to be found fault with *for what he had not done*. No, no! Mr. HUNT did not find fault with him *for what he had not done*; but *for not having done that which he ought to have done!* The very use of this sophistical, and, indeed, Jesuitical, phrase, was, of itself a proof, that there was no defence to be made. Now, at last, he cries out, that we wanted to make a *puppet* of him! Well! but, this *puppet making* work must have been confined to *a few*; and he, in order to shew his high mindedness, abandons the whole million and a half of Reformers! I see you shake your head!

Moreover, if the *puppet* story be not all a mere pretence; if it be any thing better than Mrs. Slipslop's "*marry-come-ups*," when she wanted to pick a quarrel with her Lady; if the *puppet* story be any thing better than this, or than the valour of the *hero* in the play, who was so extremely jealous of his *independence*, that he refused to fight, and quietly took a good caning, because he had been *challenged*; that is to say, urged to fight; or, as Sir Francis might call it, attempted "*to be used as a puppet*." If the *puppet* story be any thing more than this, surely we shall be permitted to ask, how it happens, that such a complaint has never been made by Sir Francis, or by any one in his behalf, *before?* He says, and has many times said, that *he* does not offer himself as a *candidate*. He says he is *forced* to be a Member of Parliament. He holds that his constituents have a right to *instruct* him. Here, then, is pretty *puppet* work! But, *how long* has this *puppet*-idea had a place in his mind? Yes, my dear Sir, you may say, that all this is plain enough. To you and me it is; but, not to all the world. And, it must be plain to every body, before I have done with the subject. *How long*, then, again I ask, is it since this *puppet* idea was engendered?

You and I can call to mind some things, Sir, which might have given birth to such an idea without any monstrous act of violence against reason and common sense. Sir Francis has frequently said, that the *law compelled* him to be Member for Westminster. I always thought that this "*Nolo Episcopari*" was little suited to politics. But, at any rate, if the law really did compel him to be a Member for Westminster, there certainly was *no law* to compel him *to get into a Grecian Car*, and to be drawn, with *Minerva* at his back (long after the day of election) four or five miles through the streets of London! There was no compulsion of a *legal* kind here. I thought, and I still think, that the exhibition was useful and proper. There was a little too much of refinement in it; but, really, after having quietly suffered himself to be jaunted about in this manner, without the least apparent suspicion of being "*used as a puppet*," it is a little extraordinary, that such extreme jealousy, should on this score, exist now. He did not appear to think himself used as a *puppet*, when the Middlesex crowds were dragging him to and from Brentford. He, in short, never started the idea, till he heard himself accused of not having done that which I say, and which his undaunted accuser said, it was his duty to do. It was then, and never till then, that the idea of *puppetism* came into his mind.

It is useless, my dear Sir, for you to feel regret at this examination; and it is still more useless, if that be possible, for you to endeavour to heal these sores. They never can be healed, except by Sir Francis's frank acknowledgement of error, and his distinct pledge to labour for the Reform that we propose, and for which the people petitioned. The very mention, in the heads of the pamphlet which I have been noticing; the very mention here of the *absence* of *Lord Cochrane* on Sir Francis's motion; this alone convinces me, that

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nothing can be said in defence of the latter gentleman. You well know, that all the Reformers scouted the idea of such a motion, as trifling, degrading, and mischievous; and it was Lord Cochrane's duty, if present, to have spoken of it as such. His Lordship, therefore, thought it prudent to be absent. Had I been in his place, I should have been present, and should have exposed all the folly and all the mischief of such a motion. Lord Cochrane's motion, from which Sir Francis was absent, was a *defence of the Reformers*, and intended as the ground work of a stand against the Bourbon Bills. Sir Francis's motion was no defence, but a clear abandonment of us, by *implying a doubt of the justice of our demands*; and, it was, too, brought on long and long after we were dungeoned and gagged. But, at any rate, supposing Lord Cochrane to have neglected his duty, what does that say in defence of Sir Francis? If any thing, it makes against him; for, what might not any man be tempted to do in the way of neglect, with the example of Sir Francis before his eyes?

To lament this falling back is useless, but to act upon the hope of bringing Sir Francis up again to the mark, is a great deal worse than useless; for then we shall give up those principles, by which we have gained, and by which alone we can preserve, the hearty co-operation of all the people. Will you give up the point of Universal Suffrage? Will you agree to deprive of their rights more than one half of the people, and those people, too, who pay the largest portion of the taxes, and who really fight the battles of the country? Will you say to the Journeymen and Labourers: "You are too insignificant to be allowed to vote; but you shall, at all times, be liable to be compelled to fight for the security of gentlemen's estates." Will you say this? Excuse my asking the question even in the way of figure. I know you never will say this; and, how, then,

are you to derive aid from Sir Francis, who, in meaning and in distinct proposals, says it all; and who has said it, too, while the petitions of a million and a half of men prayed for the contrary!

No: a separation must take place: it has taken place. It has always happened thus in every great public cause; in every struggle against tyranny. Some men, very ardent for a while, become cool. They drop off. They sometimes become opponents; and, then they are sure to accuse their former associates of going *too far*, of being *too violent*. It was thus in the days of the tyrant Stuarts; but, the cause jogged on! and the tyrants were brought upon their knees in the end. The Boroughmongers are acting the part now which the Stuarts acted in those days; and the end of the former will be very much like that of the latter, unless justice is done to the nation in a very short space of time. The defection of Sir Francis Burdett, who now calls our base calumniator his "learned and honourable friend," and who leaves *your character*, which had been aspersed by this impudent lawyer, to be manfully defended by my LORD GROSVENOR, who had never had the honour to know you personally, but who had heard your fame sounded in the nation's unanimous voice: this defection, Sir, will be an incident in the history of this struggle; but it will have no effect as to the result, and it will daily become of less and less importance. Events and circumstances *create men*, and men, in their turn, create events and circumstances. This defection, by setting people to *think*; by making them speak freely, by leading to inquiries into what Sir Francis has really *done*, and what other men might and would have done, if they had been in his place: the defection will, by these means, create new men; while the people at large will, by the same means, be taught what sort of men it is that they can safely confide in; or rather, they will be taught, that they can safely confide

in nothing but *their own exertions and watchfulness*. Vain indeed, vanity of vanities, is the thought, that the cause depends for success on Sir Francis Burdett, or on any other man. I should, indeed, regard *your* death, at this time, as a very great national calamity. But, if the nation's cause could be supposed to depend upon even *your* life, a thing so uncertain would not be worth contending for. That man must have heard your precepts with a very inattentive ear, who would feel discouraged by the death or the defection of any man. To oppose us Sir Francis has *no power*. In the ranks of our enemies of either faction he can carry only a dagger of lath and prime without a charge. The People are to him what the hairs were to the son of MANOAH. Deprived of the People, he is frail as a rush; and, without boldly contending for their rights, he cannot have the People.

It was my intention to have remarked here at some length on the base conduct of the Boroughmongers with regard to *Spanish America*; but, not having room, I must defer this task. This I do with the less regret, as I have sent forward, some time back, a *Petition* * from myself to the *Regent* upon this most important subject, which, unless instantly attended to in a proper manner, I have directed to be published, that the nation may clearly see how, in this new and striking instance, the interest, the honour, the present and future prosperity and the present and future safety and glory of the country, and of the king's family and crown, are all sacrificed to the particular interests of a band of Boroughmongers. In this Petition I have clearly shown, that *nothing* but the dread of the effects of free principles of government can possibly prevent the English government from instantly interfering. *All sorts of advantages*, and all of immense magnitude, are tendered to *England* in the Independence of *Spanish America*. You,

who know so much, will easily see that this is an event of very great importance; but, your mind must have it under undivided contemplation for some time, in order to be able to grasp it in all its extent. Here is going to take place a new distribution of wealth and power amongst nations. If treason, base treason, do not prevail in England, she will fairly and honourably receive nine tenths of that wealth and power; while she will have the glory of having given and insured freedom to twenty millions of people, the most oppressed in the world. And, is all this to be cast aside, lest *Holy Alliances* abroad and *Passive Obedience* at home should receive a deadly blow? If this should be the case, I shall hope to live to see the day, when I shall have an opportunity of moulding my Petition into *Articles of Impeachment*; not an opportunity of talking of this; but, an opportunity of doing it in good earnest. I send you an *Act*, passed by the *Congress of the United States*, in March last, relative to the Spanish Colonial Revolution. You, who refused to serve in the Navy of your native country (in which Navy you had fought under HAWKE) when that Navy was to be employed against the North American Colonists, whom you regarded as men contending for their rights, will read this *Act* with great sorrow; and, while the *fourth clause* will leave no doubt in your mind as to the *real object* of the whole *Act*, you will, with me, though thoroughly disposed to find apologies, be unable to discover, in any *policy*, in any *probabilities of future rivalship*, grounds sufficient to justify the seeking for the accomplishment of that object. I am aware, my dear Sir, of the *offence*, which I shall, by this part of my labours, give to SOME persons in the *United States*; and I foresee this, I assure you, with feelings of great concern; because it was my anxious wish to avoid giving offence to any description of persons. But, the Old Norman maxim has always been mine: "Fait ce qu'il faut, arrive ce qu'il pourra." Which an-

* Published in the Register in No. 38, Vol. 32, December 27th, 1817.

swers to what I have so often heard you pronounce: "Let us do our duty, and leave the rest to God." I have chosen a Petition to the Prince as the channel of my opinions upon this important subject; first, because it was my duty to lay my opinions before him, he being the official Chief of the nation; second, by insuring the actual delivery of the Petition to the Secretary of State, I lay the ground for just accusation against the Ministers, if they neglect their obvious duty in this respect; third, in a paper having this form and address, I was likely to be more careful, not only as to my language, but as to my statements and reasonings. It would be improper for me to publish the Petition here, because, until it has been presented to the Prince, or, at least, until it has been tendered to the Secretary of State, to publish it would be a mark of disrespect to the personage to whom it is addressed. But, I shall have no objection to its being published here, by and by; for, I hope, I shall never put upon paper any thing, of which I ought to be ashamed.

There are some things mentioned in your letter, which I must notice in a future Number. In the meanwhile I pray you to accept of my best thanks for your communications, and to remain well assured, that my return to England, whenever it shall happen, will lose much of its delight if unaccompanied with the prospect of again seeing you and profiting from your society. All under my roof join me in those sentiments of friendship and respect, with which I remain,

Your faithful

And most obedient servant,

W.M. COBBETT.

of a trial; but, the exposure of the infamous spy-system has done as much as the Juries have done. The real traitors are caught in the toils of their own treason. The very Boroughmongers must tremble at the thought of a permanent dependence on the bayonet. So that I should now have no apprehension of the dungeon; because such an act of execrable despotism could not take place unless a military government were at once established; and, when once the thing were wholly in the hands of our friends, the Soldiers, I should look upon the day of justice as being close at hand.—But, here I am in safety, and being here, I will now finish several works, which I have long since begun, and which, if I do not finish them now, I am sure I never shall. It is, at present, my opinion, that I shall go home in about a year from this time; but, if a general election should be expected, I do not know that I may not go sooner. If the electors of some city or town should think that they have the power to choose their Members; if they should see, at last, that stocks and stones are of no use in the seats of parliament; if they should see, that the yea-and-no gentry are little better than stocks and stones; if they should be weary of talkers and be desirous of having doers; and if they should only say to me, that I should have an even chance; in this case I would go home immediately. I shall, in a short time, offer myself in distinct terms to the people of a City in the middle of England, to whom I am, in some degree pledged. I shall have, as yet, no very sanguine hopes of success. But, I am ready. Conscious as I feel of my power to serve my country in the capacity of Member of Parliament, it is my duty to offer myself, and to state specifically what I will do if placed in that capacity. There requires only about half a dozen men of talent, industry, and perseverance, to make Corruption's life miserable, to worry the hag out of her

P.S. You tell me, that I may "now return with perfect safety". I believe so, thanks to the integrity and resolution of the Juries, who have baulked the blood-hounds. Indeed, I never feared any thing in the shape

senses, to drive her to cut her own throat, or, at least, to disgorge her plunder. But, nothing is to be done without *industry*. There is no use in *loose talk*, however fine and however loud. It must be *do* as well as talk, and all must be *to the purpose*. There must be something, to be *remembered*, done almost every day. The hag must have a *blister* stuck upon every part of her carcass. To do this would cost me very little trouble, as I have *all the blisters ready prepared*. Most of them I have had by me for a long while. They were got ready for other operators, who, from a want of nerves, or a want of *industry* and *decision*, have never used them, notwithstanding they solemnly promised to use every one of them. It has happened to me, more than twenty times (how many more I do not know, but I am sure, more than twenty, and, I might say more than a hundred) to be earnestly requested to get a *blister* ready; and, after I had prepared it with infinite labour and care; after I had seen it taken away with all apparent *eagerness* and *haste* to apply it; after all this, and after repeated exultations, on the part of the operators, as to the promised effects of it; after all this, it has, more than a score of times, happened to me,

never to hear another word of my blisters! We have been, my dear Sir, a bad habit: blisters should be applied by the same hands that prepared them; and, if the people of any city or town should have a fancy to see mine applied, and to see Corruption staring, jumping mad, they have only to let me know their wish.— However, there is one thing, which, if I have life and health, I am resolved to do, while in this country: to write an Account of the Life, Labours and Death of that famous Englishman THOMAS PAINE; and, perhaps, collect and republish the whole of his writings complete in a *Cheap* form, and with some *explanatory notes* to the *Rights of Man* particularly. I am here now upon the spot. I have within my reach all the means of correct information. There are only miles of land between me and the spot where he died. Justice to his memory, justice to the cause of freedom, justice to the country that gave him birth, justice to his friends, both sides the Atlantic demand at my hands an earnest endeavour to perform this task in a manner worthy the subject.

ERROR.—In No. 3, folio 81, line 8; instead of *will*, read *well*.

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